THE

BROTHERS;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

By RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRES ROYAL,

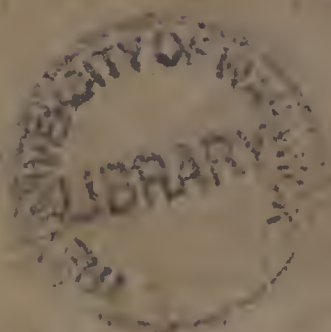
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

EDINBURGH:
Published by OLIVER & BOYD, High-Street.

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Phillip. *I am strongly tempted to go down to the Creek too.*

Act I. Scene I.

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PRINTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE MANAGERS,
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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT-GARDEN.

MEN.

Sir Benjamin Dove,.....Mr Yates.
Belfield, Senior,.....Mr Clarke.
Belfield, Junior, ...Mr Smith.
Captain Ironsides, ...Mr Woodward.
Skiff, ...Mr Quick.
Paterson,.....Mr Dyer.
Old Goodwin, ...Mr Hull.
Philip, ...Mr Bensley.
Francis,.....Mr Perry.
Jonathan, ...Mr Dunstan.

WOMEN.

Lady Dove,.....Mrs Green.
Sophia, ...Mrs Yates.
Violetta, ...Mrs Bulkley.
Fanny Goodwin,.....Mrs Ward.
Lucy Waters, ...Mrs Mattocks.
Kitty, ...Miss Valois.

Sailors, &c. &c.

SCENE—The Sea-Coast of Cornwall.

THE BROTHERS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A rocky Shore, with a Fisherman's Cabin in the Cliff: a violent Tempest, with Thunder and Lightning: a Ship discovered stranded on the Coast.—After having looked out of their Cabin, as if waiting for the abatement of the Storm,—Enter Old* GOODWIN, PHILIP, *and* FANNY.

Phil. IT blows a rank storm; 'tis well, father, we hauled the boat ashore before the weather came on; she's safe bestowed, however, let what will happen.

Old G. Ay, Philip, we had need be provident: except that poor skiff, my child, what have we left in this world that we can call our own?

Phil. To my thoughts, now, we live as happily in this poor hut, as we did yonder in the great house, when you was squire Belfield's principal tenant, and as topping a farmer as any in the whole county of Cornwall.

Old G. Ah, child!

Phil. Nay, never droop; to be sure, father, the squire has dealt hardly with you; and a mighty point truly he has gained—the ruin of an honest man! If those are to be the uses of a great estate, Heaven continue me what I am.

Fanny. Ay, ay, brother; a good conscience in a coarse drugget, is better than an aching heart in a silken gown.

Old G. Well, children, well, if you can bear misfortunes patiently, 'twere an ill office for me to repine; we have long tilled the earth for a subsistence; now, Philip, we must plough the ocean: in those waves lies our harvest; there, my brave lad, we have an equal inheritance with the best.

Phil. True, father; the sea that feeds us, provides us an habitation here in the hollow of the cliff; I trust, the squire will exact no rent for this dwelling.—Alas! that ever two brothers should have been so opposite, as our merciless landlord, and the poor young gentleman they say is now dead.

Old G. Sirrah, I charge you, name not that unhappy youth to me any more; I was endeavouring to forget him and his misfortunes, when the sight of that vessel in distress brought him afresh to my remembrance; for, it seems, he perished by sea: the more shame upon him, whose cruelty and injustice

drove him thither! but come—the wind lulls apace; let us launch the boat, and make a trip to yonder vessel: if we can assist in lightening her, perhaps she may ride it out.

Phil. 'Tis to no purpose; the crew are coming ashore in their boat—I saw them enter the creek.

Old G. Did you so? Then do you and your sister step into the cabin; make a good fire, and provide such fish, and other stores, as you have within: I will go down and meet them: whoever they may be, that have suffered this misfortune on our coasts, let us remember, children, never to regard any man as an enemy, who stands in need of our protection. [*Exit.*

Phil. I am strongly tempted to go down to the creek too; if father should light on any mischief—well, for once in my life, I'll disobey him: sister, you can look to matters within doors; I'll go round by the point, and be there as soon as he.

Fanny. Do so, Philip; 'twill be best. [*Exeunt severally.*

Enter Old GOODWIN, *followed by* FRANCIS, *and several* SAILORS, *carrying Goods and Chests from the Wreck.*

Old G. This way, my friends, this way; there's stowage enough within for all your goods.

Fran. Come, bear a hand, my brave lads, there's no time to lose; follow that honest man, and set down your chests where he directs you.

Sail. Troth, I care not how soon I'm quit of mine; 'tis plaguy heavy. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SAILORS.

1 *Sail.* Here's a pretty spot of work! plague on't, what a night has this been! I thought this d—n'd lee-shore would catch us at last.

2 *Sail.* Why, 'twas impossible to claw her off; well, there's an end of her—the Charming Sally Privateer!—Poor soul: a better sea-boat never swam upon the salt sea.

3 *Sail.* I knew we should have no luck after we took up that woman there from the packet that sunk alongside us.

1 *Sail.* What, Madam Violetta, as they call her? Why, 'tis like enough—But, hush, here comes our captain's nephew; he's a brave lad, and a seaman's friend; and between you and me—[*Boatswain's whistle.*]—But hark, we are called—Come along. [*Exeunt* SAILORS.

Enter BELFIELD, *Junior, and* FRANCIS.

Bel. jun. That ever fortune should cast us upon this coast, Francis!

Fran. Sir!

Bel. jun. Have the people landed those chests we brought off with us in the boat?

Fran. They have, sir; an old fisherman, whom we met, has shown us here to a cavern in the cliff, where we have stowed them all in safety.

Bel. jun. That's well.—Where's my uncle?

Fran. On board; no persuasions can prevail on him to quit the ship, which he swears will lift with the tide; his old crony, the master, is with him, and they ply the casks so briskly, that it seems a moot point, which fills the fastest, they or the wreck.

Bel. jun. Strange insensibility! but you must bring him off by force then, if there is no other way of saving him: I think, o' my conscience, he is as indifferent to danger as the plank he treads on; we are now thrown upon my unnatural brother's estate; that house, Francis, which you see to the left, is his; and what may be the consequence if he and my uncle should meet I know not! for such has been Captain Ironside's resentment on my account, that he has declared war against the very name of Belfield; and, in one of his whimsical passions, you know, insisted on my laying it aside for ever; so that hitherto I have been known on board by no other name than that of Lewson.

Fran. 'Tis true, sir; and I think 'twill be advisable to continue the disguise as long as you can.—As for the old captain, from the life he always leads on shore, and his impatience to get on board again, I think 'tis very possible an interview between him and your brother may be prevented.

Bel. jun. I think so too. Go then, Francis, and conduct the old gentleman hither; I see Violetta coming.—[*Exit* FRANCIS.] Sure there is something in that woman's story uncommonly mysterious.——Of English parents—born in Lisbon—her family and fortune buried in the earthquake;—so much she freely tells; but more, I am convinced, remains untold, and of a melancholy sort: she has once or twice, as I thought, seemed disposed to unbosom herself to me; but it is so painful to be told of sorrows one has not power to relieve, that I have hitherto avoided the discourse.

Enter VIOLETTA.

Well, madam, melancholy still? still that face of sorrow and despair? twice shipwrecked, and twice rescued from the jaws of death, do you regret your preservation? and have I incurred your displeasure by prolonging your existence?

Vio. Not so, Mr Lewson; such ingratitude be far from me: can I forget, when the vessel in which I had sailed from Portugal foundered by your side, with what noble, what benevo-

lent ardour you flew to my assistance? Regardful only of my safety, your own seemed no part of your care.

Bel. jun. Oh! no more of this; the preservation of a fellow-creature is as natural as self-defence: you now, for the first time in your life, breathe the air of England—a rough reception it has given you; but be not, therefore, discouraged; our hearts, Violetta, are more accessible than our shores; nor can you find inhospitality in Britain, save only in our climate.

Vio. These characteristics of the English may be just; I take my estimate from a less favourable example.

Bel jun. Villany, madam, is the growth of every soil; nor can I, while yonder habitation is in my view, forget that England has given birth to monsters that disgrace humanity; but this I will say for my countrymen, that where you can point out one rascal with a heart to wrong you, I will produce fifty honest fellows ready and resolute to redress you.

Vio. But on what part of the English coast is it that we are now landed?

Bel. jun. On the coast of Cornwall.

Vio. Of Cornwall is it? You seem to know the owner of that house: are you well acquainted with the country hereabouts?

Bel. jun. Intimately; it has been the cradle of my infancy, and, with little interruption, my residence ever since.

Vio. You are amongst your friends, then, no doubt; how fortunate is it, that you will have their consolation and assistance in your distress!

Bel. jun. Madam!

Vio. Every moment will bring them down to the very shores; this brave, humane, this hospitable people, will flock in crowds to your relief; your friends, Mr Lewson—

Bel. jun. My friends, Violetta! must I confess it to you, I have no friends!—Those rocks, that have thus scattered my treasures—those waves, that have devoured them—to me are not so fatal, as hath been that man, whom nature meant to be my nearest friend.

Vio. What, and are you a fellow-sufferer, then? Is this the way you reconcile me to your nation? Are these the friends of humankind? Why don't we fly from this ungenerous, this ingrateful country?

Bel. jun. Hold, madam! one villain, however base, can no more involve a whole nation in his crimes, than one example, however dignified, can inspire it with his virtues.—Thank Heaven, the worthless owner of that mansion is yet without a rival.

Vio. You have twice directed my attention to that house;

'tis a lovely spot; what pity, that so delicious a retirement should be made the residence of so undeserving a being!

Bel. jun. It is, indeed, a charming place; and was once the seat of hospitality and honour; but its present possessor, Andrew Belfield—Madam! for Heaven's sake, what ails you?—You seem suddenly disordered. Have I said—

Vio. No, 'tis nothing; don't regard me, Mr Lewson: I am weak, and subject to these surprises; I shall be glad, however, to retire.

Bel. jun. A little repose, I hope, will relieve you; within this hut some accommodation may be found: lean on my arm.

[*Leads her to the door of the cabin.*

Enter Old GOODWIN.

Old G. Heaven defend me! do my eyes deceive me? 'tis wondrous like his shape, his air, his look——

Bel. jun. What is your astonishment, friend? Do you know me? If it was not for that habit, I should say your name is Goodwin.

Old G. 'Tis he! he is alive! my dear young master, Mr Belfield! Yes, sir, my name is Goodwin: however changed my appearance, my heart is still the same, and overflows with joy at this unexpected meeting.

Bel. jun. Give me thy hand, my old, my honest friend: and is this sorry hole thy habitation?

Old G. It is.

Bel. jun. The world, I see, has frowned on thee since we parted.

Old G. Yes, sir; but what are my misfortunes? You must have undergone innumerable hardships; and now, at last, shipwrecked on your own coast!—Well, but your vessel is not totally lost; and we will work night and day in saving your effects.

Bel. jun. Oh! as for that, the sea gave all, let it take back a part: I have enough on shore not to envy my brother his fortune. But there is one blessing, Master Goodwin, I own I shall grudge him the possession of—There was a young lady—

Old G. What, sir, haven't you forgot Miss Sophia?

Bel. jun. Forget her! my heart trembles while I ask you, if she is, indeed, as you call her, Miss Sophia?

Old G. She is yet unmarried, though every day we expect—

Bel. jun. 'Tis enough! Fortune, I acquit thee!—Happy be the winds that threw me on this coast, and blest the rocks that received me! Let my vessel go to pieces; she has done her part in bearing me hither; while I can cast myself at the feet of my Sophia, recount to her my unabating passion, and have one fair struggle for her heart. [*Exeunt.*

Enter VIOLETTA.

Vio. Once more I am alone.—How my heart sunk when Lewson pronounced the name of Belfield! it must be he! it must be my false, cruel, (yet spite of all my wrongs) beloved husband! Yes, there he lives—each circumstance confirms it; —Cornwall the county; here the sea-coast, and these white craggy cliffs; there the disposition of his seat—the grove, lake, lawn; every feature of the landscape tallies with the descriptions he has given me of it. What shall I do, and to whom shall I complain? When Lewson spoke of him, it was with a bitterness that shocked me; I will not disclose myself to him; by what fell from him, I suspect he is related to Mr Belfield. —But hush! I talk to these rocks, and forget that they have ears!

Enter FANNY.

Fanny. Are you any better, madam? Is the air of any service to you?

Vio. I am much relieved by it: the beauty of that place attracted my attention! and, if you please, we will walk further up the hill, to take a nearer view of it. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Part of the Crew.

Omnes. Huzza, huzza, huzza!

1 *Sail.* Long life to your honour! welcome ashore, noble captain!

2 *Sail.* Avast there, Jack! stand clear, and let his old honour pass; bless his heart, he looks cheerly, howsomever; let the world wag as it will, he'll never flinch.

3 *Sail.* Not he! he's true English oak to the heart of him; and a fine old seaman-like figure he is.

Enter CAPTAIN IRONSIDES *and* SKIFF.

Capt. Ah, messmates, we're all aground; I have been taking a parting cup with the charming Sally—she's gone; but the stoutest bark must have an end; master here, and I, did all we could to lighten her; we took leave of her in an officer-like manner.

1 *Sail.* Hang sorrow; we know the worst on't—'tis only taking a fresh cruise; and, for my part, I'll sail with Captain Ironsides as far as there's water to carry me.

Omnes. So we will all!

Capt. Say ye so, my hearts; if the wind sits that way, hoist sail, say I: old George will make one amongst you, if that be all; I hate an idle life.—So, so,—away to your work; to-morrow we'll make a day on't. [*Exeunt* SAILORS.

Capt. Skiff!

Skiff. Here, your honour.

Capt. I told you, Skiff, how 'twould be; if you had luff'd up in time, as I would have had you, and not made so free with the land, this mishap had never come to pass.

Skiff. Lord love you, Captain Ironsides, 'twas a barrel of beef to a biscuit, the wind had not shifted so direct contrary as it did; who could have thought it?

Capt. Why, I could have thought it; every body could have thought it: do you consider whereabouts you are, man? Upon the coast of England, as I take it. Every thing here goes contrary, both by sea and land—Every thing whips, and chops, and changes about, like mad, in this country; and the people, I think, are as full of vagaries as the climate.

Skiff. Well, I could have swore——

Capt. Ay, so you could, Skiff, and so you did, pretty roundly too; but for the good you did by it, you might as well have puffed a whiff of tobacco in the wind's face.

Skiff. Well, Captain, though we have lost our ship, we haven't lost our all: thank the fates, we've saved treasure enough to make all our fortunes, notwithstanding.

Capt. Fortunes, quotha! What have two such old weather-beaten fellows as thee and I are to do with fortunes? or, indeed, what has fortune to do with us? Flip and tobacco are the only luxuries we have any relish for: had we fine houses, could we live in them? a greasy hammock has been our birth for these fifty years; fine horses, could we ride them? and as for the fair sex there, that my nephew makes such a pother about, I don't know what thou may'st think of the matter, Skiff; but, for my own part, I should not care if there were no such animals in the creation.

Enter BELFIELD, *Junior.*

Bel. jun. Uncle; what cheer, man?

Capt. Oh, Bob, is it thee? whither bound now, my dear boy?

Bel. jun. Why, how can you ask such a question? We have landed our treasures, saved all our friends, and set foot upon English ground; and what business, think you, can a young fellow like me have, but one?

Capt. Pshaw! you're a fool, Bob; these wenches will be the undoing of you; a plague of them altogether, say I! What are they good for, but to spoil company, and keep brave fellows from their duty? O' my conscience, they do more mischief to the king's navy in one twelvemonth, than the French have done in ten; a pack of—but I ha' done with them; thank the stars, I ha' fairly washed my hands o' them; I ha' nothing to say to none of them.

Skiff. Mercy be good unto us! that my wife could but hear your worship talk!

Bel. jun. Oh, my dear uncle——

Capt. But I'll veer away no more good advice after you; so even drive as you will, under your petticoat-sails;—black, brown, fair, or tawny, 'tis all fish that comes in your net: why, where's your reason, Bob, all this here while? Where's your religion, and be d—ned to you?

Bel. jun. Come, come, my dear uncle, a truce to your philosophy. Go, throw your dollars into yonder ocean, and bribe the tempest to be still; you shall as soon reverse the operations of nature, as wean my heart from my Sophia.

Capt. Hold, hold, take me right; if, by Sophia, you mean the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove, I don't care if I make one with you: what say'st thou, boy? shall it be so?

Bel. jun. So then you think there may be one good woman, however?

Capt. Just as I think there may be one honest Dutchman, one sober German, or one righteous methodist. Look ye, Bob, so I do but keep single, I have no objection to other people's marrying; but, on those occasions, I would manage myself as I would my ship; not by running her into every odd creek and cranny, in the smuggling fashion, as if I had no good credentials to produce; but play fairly, and in sight, d'ye see; and, whenever a safe harbour opens, stand boldly in, boy, and lay her up snug, in a good birth, once for all.

Bel. jun. Come then, uncle, let us about it; and you may greatly favour my enterprise, since you can keep the father and mother in play, while I———

Capt. Avast, young man, avast! the father, if you please, without the mother; Sir Benjamin's a passable good companion for a landman; but for my lady—I'll have nothing to say to my lady! she's his wife, thank the stars, and not mine.

Bel. jun. Be it as you will; I shall be glad of your company on any terms.

Capt. Say no more then. About ship; if you are bound for that port, I'm your mate: master, look to the wreck; I'm for a fresh cruise. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Outside of* SIR BENJAMIN DOVE'S *House.*

Enter BELFIELD, *Senior, and* LUCY WATERS.

Lucy. What, don't I know you? haven't you been to me of all mankind the basest!

Bel. Not yet, Lucy.

Lucy. Sure, Mr Belfield, you won't pretend to deny it to my face!

Bel. To my face, child, I will not pretend that I can deny any thing; you are much too handsome to be contradicted.

Lucy. Pish!

Bel. So, so!

Lucy. Haven't you, faithless as you are, promised me marriage, over and over again?

Bel. Repeatedly.

Lucy. And you have now engaged yourself to the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove, have you not?

Bel. Assuredly.

Lucy. Let me demand of you, then, Mr Belfield, since you have no honourable designs towards me yourself, why you prevented those of an humbler lover, young Philip, the son of your late tenant, poor Goodwin?

Bel. For the very reasons you state in your question; because I had no honourable designs, and he had: you disappointed my hopes, and I was resolved to defeat his.

Lucy. And this you thought reason sufficient to expel his father from your farm; to persecute him, and his innocent family, till you had accomplished their ruin, and driven them to the very brink of the ocean for their habitation and subsistence?

Bel. Your questions, Miss Lucy, begin to be impertinent.

Lucy. Oh, do they touch you, sir? But I'll waste no more time with you; my business is with your Sophia: here, in the very spot which you hope to make the scene of your guilty triumphs, will I expose you to her: set forth your inhuman conduct to your unhappy brother; and detect the mean artifices you have been driven to, in order to displace him in her affections.

Bel. You will?

Lucy. I will, be assured; so let them pass.

Bel. Stay, Lucy, understand yourself a little better: didn't you pretend to Sophia, that my brother paid his addresses to you; that he had pledged himself to marry you; nay, that he had———

Lucy. Hold, Mr Belfield, nor further explain a transaction, which, though it reflects shame enough upon me, that was your instrument, ought to cover you, who was principal in the crime, with treble confusion and remorse.

Bel. True, child, it was rather a disreputable transaction; and 'tis therefore fit no part of it should rest with me; I shall disavow it altogether.

Lucy. Incredible confidence!

Bel. We shall see who will meet most belief in the world—you or I; choose, therefore, your part: if you keep my secret, you make me your friend; if you betray it, you have me for your enemy; and a fatal one you shall find me. Now enter, if you think fit; there lies your way to Sophia. [*She goes into the house.*] So! how am I to parry this blow?—what plea shall I use with Sophia?—'twas the ardour of my love—any thing will find pardon with a woman that conveys flattery to her charms.—After all, if the worst should happen, and I should be defeated in this match, so shall I be saved from doing that, which, when done, 'tis probable I may repent of; and I have some intimations from within, which tell me that it will be so: I perceive that, in this life, he who is checked by the rubs of compunction, can never arrive at the summit of prosperity.

Enter PATERSON.

Pat. What, melancholy, Mr Belfield? So near your happiness, and full of thought?

Bel. Happiness! what's that?

Pat. I'll tell you, sir; the possession of a lovely girl, with fifty thousand pounds in her lap, and twice fifty thousand virtues in her mind: this I call happiness, as much as mortal man can merit; and this, as I take it, you are destined to enjoy.

Bel. That is not so certain, Mr Paterson; would you believe it, that perverse hussy, Lucy Waters, who left me but this minute, threatens to transverse all my hopes, and is gone this instant to Sophia with that resolution?

Pat. Impossible! how is Miss Waters provided or provoked to do this?

Bel. Why, 'tis a foolish story, and scarce worth relating to you; but you know, when your letters called me home from Portugal, I found my younger brother in close attendance on Miss Dove; and, indeed, such good use had the fellow made of his time in my absence, that I found it impossible to counterwork his operations by fair and open approaches; so, to make short of the story, I took this girl, Lucy Waters, into partnership; and by a happy device, ruined him with Sophia.

Pat. This, Mr Belfield, I neither know, nor wish to know.

Bel. Let it pass, then: defeated in these views, my brother, as you know, betook himself to the desperate course of privateering, with that old tar-barrel, my uncle: what may have been his fate, I know not; but I have found it convenient to propagate a report of his death.

Pat. I am sorry for it, Mr Belfield; I wish nothing was convenient, that can be thought dishonourable.

Bel. Nature, Mr Paterson, never put into a human composition more candour and credulity than she did into mine; but acquaintance with life has shown me how impracticable these principles are: to live with mankind, we must live like mankind; was it a world of honesty, I should blush to be a man of art.

Pat. And do you dream of ever reaching your journey's end by such crooked paths as these are?

Bel. And yet, my most sage moralist, wonderful as it may seem to thee, true it is, notwithstanding, that, after having threaded all these by-ways and crooked alleys, which thy right-lined apprehension knows nothing of; after having driven my rival from the field, and being almost in possession of the spoil, still I feel a repugnance in me that almost tempts me to renounce my good fortune, and abandon a victory I have struggled so hard to obtain.

Pat. I guessed as much; 'tis your Violetta, 'tis your fair Portuguese, that counterworks your good fortune; and I must own to you, it was principally to save you from that improvident attachment, that I wrote so pressingly for your return; but though I have got your body in safe holding, your heart is still at Lisbon; and if you marry Miss Dove, 'tis because Violetta's fortune was demolished by the earthquake; and Sir Benjamin's stands safe upon terra firma.

Bel. Pr'ythee, Paterson, don't be too hard upon me; sure you don't suspect that I am married to Violetta.

Pat. Married to Violetta! Now you grow much too serious, and 'tis time to put an end to the discourse. [*Exit into the house.*

Bel. And you grow much too quick-sighted, Mr Paterson, for my acquaintance. I think he does not quite suspect me of double-dealing in this business; and yet I have my doubts: his reply to my question was equivocal, and his departure abrupt—I know not what to think—This I know, that love is a deity, and avarice a devil; that Violetta is my lawful wife; and that Andrew Belfield is a villain. [*Exit.*

PATERSON *passes over the Stage.*

Pat. All abroad this fine day—not a creature within doors.

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. Mr Paterson! hist! Mr Paterson, a word in your ear, sweet sir.

Pat. Curse on't, she has caught me—Well, Mrs Kitty?

Kitty. Why, I have been hunting you all the house over; my lady's impatient to see you.

Pat. Oh, I'm my Lady Dove's most obedient servant—And what are her ladyship's commands, pray?

Kitty. Fie, Mr Paterson! how should I know what her ladyship wants with you? but a secret it is, no doubt, for she desires you to come to her immediately in the garden, at the bottom of the yew-tree walk, next the warren.

Pat. The devil she does!—What a pity it is, Mrs Kitty, we can't cure your lady of this turn for solitude; I wish you would go with me; your company, probably, will divert her from her contemplations: besides, I shall certainly mistake the place.

Kitty. I go with you, Mr Paterson! a fine thing, truly! I'd have you to know, that my character is not to be trusted with young fellows in yew-tree walks, whatever my lady may think of the matter—Besides, I've an assignation in another place. [*Exit.*

Pat. What a devilish dilemma am I in! Why, this is a peremptory assignation—Certain it is, there are some ladies that no wise men should be commonly civil to—Here have I been flattering myself that I was stroking a termagant into humour, and all the while have been betraying a tender victim into love. Love! love, did I say? Her ladyship's passion is a disgrace to the name—But what shall I do?—'Tis a pitiful thing to run away from a victory; but 'tis frequently the case in precipitate successes; we conquer more than we have wit to keep, or ability to enjoy. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Yew-tree Walk.*

Enter BELFIELD, *Junior.*

Bel. jun. Now, could I but meet my Sophia—Where can she have hid herself?—Hush! Lady Dove, as I live!

Enter LADY DOVE.

Lady D. So, Mr Paterson, you're a pretty gentleman, to keep a lady waiting here: why, how you stand! Come, come, I shall expect a very handsome atonement for this indecorum—Why, what! let me look—Ah! who have we here?

Bel. jun. A man, madam; and, though not your man, yet one as honest and as secret: come, come, my lady, I'm no tell-tale; be you but grateful, this goes no further.

Lady D. Lost and undone! young Belfield!

Bel. jun. The same; but be not alarmed; we both have our secrets; I am, like you, a votary to love: favour but my virtuous passion for Miss Dove, and take you your Paterson; I shall be as silent as the grave.

Lady D. Humph!

Bel. jun. Nay, never hesitate; my brother, I know, had your wishes: but wherein has nature favoured him more than

me? And, since fortune has now made my scale as heavy as his, why should you partially direct the beam?

Lady D. Well, if it is so, and that you promise not to betray me—but this accident has so discomposed me, (plague on't, say I!) don't press me any further, at present; I must leave you; remember the condition of our agreement, and expect my friendship——Oh, I could tear your eyes out! [*Exit.*

Bel. jun. Well, Sir Benjamin, keep your own counsel, if you are wise; I'll do as I would be done by; had I such a wife as Lady Dove, I should be very happy to have such a friend as Mr Paterson. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Garden.*

Enter SOPHIA DOVE *and* LUCY WATERS.

Lucy. If there is faith in woman, I have seen young Belfield; I have beheld his apparition; for what else could it be?

Soph. How? when? where?

Lucy. As I crossed the yew-tree walk, I saw him pass by the head of the canal towards the house. Alas, poor youth! the injuries I have done him have called him from his grave.

Soph. Injuries, Miss Waters! What injuries have you done him? Tell me; for therein, perhaps, I may be concerned.

Lucy. Deeply concerned you are; with the most penitent remorse I confess it to you, that his affections to you were pure, honest, and sincere. Yes, amiable Sophia, you was unrivalled in his esteem; and I, who persuaded you to the contrary, am the basest, the falsest of womankind; every syllable I told you of his engagements to me was a malicious invention: how could you be so blind to your own superiority, to give credit to the imposition, and suffer him to depart without an explanation? Oh, that villain, that villain, his brother, has undone us all.

Soph. Villain, do you call him? Whither would you transport my imagination? You hurry me with such rapidity from one surprise to another, that I know not where to fix, how to act, or what to believe.

Lucy. Oh, madam, he is a villain—a most accomplished one; and, if I can but snatch you from the snare he has spread for you, I hope it will in some measure atone for the injuries I have done to you, and to that unhappy youth, who now—O, Heavens! I see him again; he comes this way; I cannot endure his sight; alive or dead, I must avoid him. [*Runs out.*

Enter BELFIELD, *Junior.*

Bel. jun. Adorable Sophia! this transport overpays my labours.

Soph. Sir, Mr Belfield, is it you? Oh, support me!—

Bel. jun. With my life, thou loveliest of women! Behold your poor adventurer is returned! happy past compute, if his fate is not indifferent to you: rich beyond measure, if his safety is worth your concern.

Soph. Release me, I beseech you: what have I done! Sure you are too generous to take advantage of my confusion?

Bel. jun. Pardon me, my Sophia; the advantages I take from your confusion are not to be purchased by the riches of the east: I would not forego the transport of holding you one minute in my arms for all that wealth and greatness have to give.

Enter LADY DOVE, *while* BELFIELD, *Junior, is kneeling and embracing* SOPHIA.

Lady D. Hey-day! what's here to do with you both?

Soph. Ah!—— [*Shrieks.*

Bel. jun. Confusion! Lady Dove here!

Lady D. Yes, sir, Lady Dove is here, and will take care you shall have no more garden dialogues. On your knees too!—(The fellow was not half so civil to me.)—Ridiculous! A poor, beggarly swabber, truly—As for you Mrs——

Bel. jun. Hold, madam; as much of your fury and foul language as you please upon me; but not one hard word against that lady, or by Heavens!——

Lady D. Come, sir, none of your reprobate swearing; none of your sea-noises here; I would my first husband was alive, I would he was, for your sake. I am surprised, Miss Dove, you have no more regard for your reputation; a delicate swain truly you have chosen, just thrown ashore from a shipwreck'd privateer. Go, go, get you in, for shame; your father shall know of these goings on, depend on't: as for you, sir——

[*Exit* SOPHIA.—*As* LADY DOVE *is going out,* BELFIELD, *Junior, stops her.*

Bel. jun. A word with you, madam.—Is this fair dealing? What would you have said, if I had broken in thus upon you and Mr Paterson?

Lady D. Mr Paterson! Why, you rave. What is it you mean?

Bel. jun. Come, come, this is too ridiculous; you know your reputation is in my keeping; call to mind what passed between us awhile ago, and the engagement you are under on that account.

Lady D. Ha, ha, ha!

Bel. jun. Very well, truly; and you think to brave this matter out, do you?

Lady D. Most assuredly; and shall make Sir Benjamin call you to account, if you dare to breathe a word against my

reputation: incorrigible coxcomb! to think I would keep any terms with you after such an event. Take my word for it, Belfield, you are come home no wiser than you went out; you missed the only advantage you might have taken of that rencounter, and now I set you at defiance: take heed to what you say, or look to hear from Sir Benjamin.

Bel. jun. Oh, no doubt on't: how can Sir Benjamin avoid fighting for your sake, when your ladyship has so liberally equipped him with weapons? [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.—*A Hall.*

Enter JONATHAN *and* FRANCIS.

Jon. And so, sir, 'tis just as I tell you; every thing in this family goes according to the will of the lady: for my own part, I am one of those that hate trouble; I swim with the stream, and make my place as easy as I can.

Fran. Your looks, Mr Jonathan, convince me that you live at your ease.

Jon. I do so; and therefore (in spite of the old proverb, "Like master, like man,") you never saw two people more different than I and Sir Benjamin Dove. He, Lord help him! is a little, peaking, puling thing—I am a jolly portable man, as you see. It so happened, that we both became widowers at the same time; I knew when I was well, and have continued single ever since. He fell into the clutches of—Hark! sure I hear my lady——

Fran. No, it was nothing. When did the poor gentleman light upon this termagant?

Jon. Lack-a-day! 'twas here at the borough of Knavestown, when master had the great contest with Squire Belfield, about three years ago: her first husband, Mr Searcher, was a king's messenger, as they call it, and came down express from a great man about court during the poll; he caught a surfeit, as ill luck would have it, at the election dinner: and, before he died, his wife, that's now my lady, came down to see him: then it was master fell in love with her: 'egad, 'twas the unluckiest job of all his life.

Sir B. [*Without.*] Jonathan! why, Jonathan?

Fran. Hark! you are called.

Jon. Ay, ay, 'tis only my master; my lady tells the servants not to mind what Sir Benjamin says, and I love to do as I am bid.

Fran. Well, honest Jonathan, if you won't move, I must; by this time I hope my young master is happy with your young mistress. [*Exit.*

Enter SIR BENJAMIN DOVE.

Sir B. Why, Jonathan, I say? Oh, are you here? Why couldn't you come when I called you?

Jon. Lack-a-day! sir, you don't consider how much easier it is for you to call than for me to come.

Sir B. I think, honest Jonathan, when I first knew you, you was a parish orphan; I 'prenticed you out; you run away from your master; I took you into my family; you married; I set you up in a farm of my own; stocked it; you paid me no rent; I received you again into my service, or rather, I should say, my lady's. Are these things so, or does my memory fail me, Jonathan?

Jon. Why, to be sure, I partly remember somewhat of what your worship mentions.

Sir B. If you partly remember something of all this, Jonathan, don't entirely forget to come when I call.

Capt. [*Without.*] Hoy there! within! what, nobody stirring! all hands asleep; all under the hatches!

Sir B. Hey-day! who the dickens have we got here? Old Captain Ironsides, as I am a sinner! who could have thought of this? Run to the door, good Jonathan—nay, hold, there's no escaping now:—what will become of me? He'll ruin every thing, and throw the whole house into confusion.

Enter CAPTAIN IRONSIDES.

Capt. What, Sir Ben! my little knight of Malta, give me a buss, my boy! Hold, hold! sure I am out of my reckoning! Let me look a little nearer; why, what mishap has befallen you, that you heave out these signals of distress?

Sir B. I am heartily glad to see thee, my old friend; but a truce to your sea-phrases, for I don't understand them: what signals of distress have I about me?

Capt. Why, that white flag there, at your main-topmast head. In plain English, what dost thou do with that clout about thy pate?

Sir B. Clout, do you call it? 'Tis a little en dishabille, indeed; but there's nothing extraordinary, I take it, in a man's wearing his gown and cap in a morning; 'tis the dress I usually choose to study in.

Capt. And this hall is your library, is it? Ah, my old friend! my old friend! But come, I want to have a little chat with you, and thought to have dropped in at pudding time, as they say; for though it may be morning with thee, Sir Ben, 'tis mid-day with the rest of the world.

Sir B. Indeed! is it so late?—But I was fallen upon an agreeable tête-a-tête with Lady Dove, and hardly knew how the time passed.

Capt. Come, come, 'tis very clear how your time has passed; but what occasion is there for this fellow's being privy to our conversation?—Why don't the lubber stir? What does the fat lazy oaf stand staring at?

Sir B. What shall I say now? Was ever any thing so distressing?—Why, that's Jonathan, Captain; don't you remember your old friend, Jonathan?

Jon. I hope your honour's in good health; I'm glad to see your honour come home again.

Capt. Honest Jonathan, I came to visit your master, and not you; if you'll go and hasten dinner, and bring Sir Benjamin his clothes, you'll do me a very acceptable piece of service! for, to tell you the truth, my friend, I hav'n't had a comfortable meal of fresh provision this many a day.

[*Exit* JONATHAN.

Sir B. 'Foregad, you're come to the wrong house to find one. [*Aside.*

Capt. And so, sir knight, knowing I was welcome, and having met with a mishap here, upon your coast, I am come to taste your good cheer, and pass an evening with you over a tiff of punch.

Sir B. The devil you are! [*Aside.*]—This is very kind of you. There is no man in England, Captain Ironsides, better pleased to see his friends about him than I am.

Capt. Ay, ay, if I didn't think I was welcome I shouldn't ha' come.

Sir B. You may be assured you are welcome.

Capt. I am assured.

Sir B. You are, by my soul: take my word for it, you are.

Capt. Well, well, what need of all this ceremony about a meal's meat?—Who doubts you?

Sir B. You need not doubt me, believe it. I'll only step out, and ask my lady what time she has ordered dinner; or whether she has made any engagement I'm not apprized of.

Capt. No, no; engagement! how can that be, and you in this pickle? Come, come, sit down; dinner won't come the quicker for your inquiry: and now tell me, how does my goddaughter, Sophia?

Sir B. Thank you heartily, Captain, my daughter's well in health.

Capt. That's well; and how fares your fine new wife? How goes on matrimony? Fond as ever, my little amorous dove; always billing, always cooing?

Sir B. No, Captain, no; we are totally altered in that respect; we show no fondness now before company; my lady is so delicate in that particular, that from the little notice she

takes of me in public, you would scarce believe we were man and wife.

Capt. Ha! ha! ha!—Why, 'tis the very circumstance would confirm it; but I am glad to hear it—for of all things under the sun, I most nauseate your nuptial familiarities; and, though you remember I was fool enough to dissuade you from this match, I'm rejoiced to hear you manage so well and so wisely.

Sir B. No man happier in this life, Captain; no man happier; one thing only is wanting—had the kind stars but crowned our endearments——

Capt. What, my lady don't breed, then?

Sir B. Hush, hush! for Heaven's sake, don't speak so loud; should my lady overhear you, it might put strange things into her head. Oh! she is a lady of delicate spirits, tender nerves—quite weak and tender nerves; a small matter throws her down; gentle as a lamb; starts at a straw; speak loud, and it destroys her. Oh! my friend, you are not used to deal with women's constitutions; these hypochondriac cases require a deal of management; 'tis but charity to humour them; and you cannot think what pains it requires to keep them always quiet and in temper.

Capt. Ay, like enough.

Lady D. [*Without.*] Hey-day! Sir Benjamin!

Capt. But here comes my lady, and in excellent temper, if her looks don't belie her.

Enter LADY DOVE.

Lady D. What's to do now, Sir Benjamin? What's the matter, that you send for your clothes in such a hurry? Can't you be contented to remain as you are? Your present dress is well enough to stay at home in; and I don't know that you have any call out of doors.

Capt. Gentle as a lamb, Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. This attention of yours, my dear, is beyond measure flattering! I am infinitely beholden to you; but you are so taken up with your concern on my account, that you overlook our old friend and neighbour, Captain Ironsides.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin, you make yourself quite ridiculous. This folly is not to be endured; you are enough to tire the patience of any woman living.

Sir B. She's quite discomposed; all in a flutter, for fear I should take cold by changing my dress.

Capt. Yes, I perceive she has exceeding weak nerves. You are much in the right to humour her.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin Dove, if you mean that I should stay a minute longer in this house, I insist upon your turning

that old porpoise out of it. Is it not enough to bring your nauseous sea companions within these doors, but must I be compelled to entertain them? Poh! I sha'n't get the scent of his tar-jacket out of my nostrils this fortnight.

Sir B. Hush, my dear Lady Dove! For Heaven's sake, don't shame and expose me in this manner! How can I possibly turn an honest gentleman out of doors, who has given me no offence in life.

Lady D. Marry, but he has though, and great offence too. I tell you, Sir Benjamin, you are made a fool of.

Sir B. Nay, now, my dear sweet love, be composed.

Lady D. Yes, forsooth, and let a young, rambling, raking prodigal run away with your daughter!

Sir B. How? what?

Lady D. A fine thing, truly, to be composed——

Capt. Who is it your ladyship suspects of such a design?

Lady D. Who, sir? Why, who but your nephew, Robert? You flattered us with a false hope he was dead; but, to our sorrow, we find him alive, and returned: and now you are cajoling this poor, simple, unthinking man, while your wild Indian, your savage there, is making off with his daughter.

Sir B. Mercy on us! what am I to think of all this?

Capt. What are you to think! Why, that it is a lie—that you are an ass—and that your wife is a termagant. My nephew is a lad of honour, and scorns to run away with any man's daughter, or wife either—though, I think, there's little danger of that here. As for me, sooner than mess with such a vixen, I'd starve; and so, Sir Benjamin, I wish you a good stomach to your dinner. [*Exit.*

Lady D. Insolent, unmannerly brute! was ever the like heard?—And you to stand tamely by!—I declare, I've a great mind to raise the servants upon him, since I have no other defenders.—Thus am I for ever treated by your scurvy companions!

Sir B. Be pacified, my dear.—Am I in fault? But, for Heaven's sake, what is become of my daughter?

Lady D. Yes, you can think of your daughter, but she is safe enough for this turn; I have taken care of her for one while, and thus I am rewarded for it.—Am I a vixen?—am I a termagant? Oh, had my first husband—had my poor, dear, dead Mr Searcher heard such a word, he would have rattled him!—But he—What do I talk of? He was a man. Yes, yes, he was indeed a man.—As for you——

Sir B. Strain the comparison no further, Lady Dove; there are particulars, I dare say, in which I fall short of Mr Searcher.

Lady D. Short of him ! I'll tell you what, Sir Benjamin, I valued the dear greyhound that hung at his button-hole, more than I do all the foolish trinkets your vanity has lavished on me.

Sir B. Your ladyship, doubtless, was the paragon of wives. I well remember, when the poor man laid ill, at my borough of Knavestown, how you came flying on the wings of love, by the Exeter waggon, to visit him before he died.

Lady D. I understand your sneer, sir, and I despise it.—There is one condition only upon which you may regain my forfeited opinion : young Belfield, who, with this old fellow, has designs in hand of a dangerous nature, has treated me with an indignity still greater than what you have been a witness to. Show yourself a man upon this occasion, Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. Any thing, dearest, for peace's sake.

Lady D. Peace's sake ! It is war, and not peace, which I require.—But come, if you will walk this way, I'll lay the matter open to you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Sea-shore before* GOODWIN'S *Cabin.*

Enter VIOLETTA *and* FANNY.

Vio. And when is this great match of Mr Belfield's to be ?

Fanny. Alas, madam, we look to hear of it every day.

Vio. You seem to consider this event, child, as a misfortune to yourself. However others may be affected by Mr Belfield's marrying Miss Dove, to you, I conceive, it must be a matter of indifference.

Fanny. I have been taught, madam, to consider no event as matter of indifference to me, by which good people are made unhappy. Miss Sophy is the best young lady living—Mr Belfield is—

Vio. Hold, Fanny ; do step into the house—in my writing-box you will find a letter, sealed, but without a direction ; bring it to me.—[*Exit* FANNY.]—I have been writing to this base man, for I want fortitude to support an interview.—What if I unbosomed myself to this girl, and intrusted the letter to her conveyance ? She seems exceedingly honest, and, for one of so mean a condition, uncommonly sensible. I think I may safely confide in her. Well, Fanny ?

Enter FANNY.

Fanny. Here is your letter, madam.

Vio. I thank you.—I trouble you too much ; but thou art

a good-natured girl, and your attention to me shall not go unrewarded.

Fanny. I am happy to wait upon you—I wish I could do or say any thing to divert you; but my discourse can't be very amusing to a lady of your sort; and talking of this wedding seems to have made you more melancholy than you was before.

Vio. Come hither, child; you have remarked my disquietude, I will now disclose to you the occasion of it. You seem interested for Miss Dove—I too am touched with her situation. You tell me she is the best young lady living.

Fanny. Oh, madam, if it were possible for an angel to take a human shape, she must be one.

Vio. 'Tis very well—I commend your zeal; you are speaking now of the qualities of her mind?

Fanny. Not of them alone; she has not only the virtues, but the beauties of an angel.

Vio. Indeed! Pray tell me, is she so very handsome?

Fanny. As fine a person as you could wish to see.

Vio. Tall?

Fanny. About your size.

Vio. Fair or dark complexioned?

Fanny. Of a most lovely complexion—'tis her greatest beauty, and all pure nature, I'll be answerable;—then her eyes are so soft, and so smiling! and as for her hair—

Vio. Hey-day! why, where are you rambling, child? I am satisfied; I make no doubt she is a consummate beauty, and that Mr Belfield loves her to distraction. [*Aside.*] I don't like this girl so well as I did; she is a great talker. I am glad I did not disclose my mind to her.—I'll go in, and determine on some expedient. [*Exit.*

Fanny. Alas, poor lady! as sure as can be, she has been crossed in love; nothing in this world besides could make her so miserable. But, sure, I see Mr Francis!—if falling in love leads to such misfortunes, 'tis fit I should get out of his way. [*Exit.*

Enter FRANCIS *and* PHILIP.

Fran. Wasn't that your sister, Philip, that ran into the cabin?

Phil. I think it was.

Fran. You've made a good day's work on't—the weather coming about so fair, I think we've scarce lost any thing of value, but the ship. Didn't you meet the old Captain, as you came down to the creek?

Phil. I did.—He has been at Sir Benjamin Dove's here, at Cropley Castle, and is come back in a curious humour.

Fran. So, so! I attended my young master thither at the same time. How came they not to return together?

Phil. That I can't tell.—Come, let's go in and refresh ourselves. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Garden.*

SOPHIA DOVE *and* LUCY WATERS.

Soph. Indeed, and indeed, Miss Lucy Waters, these are strong facts which you tell me; and I do believe, no prudent woman would engage with a man of Mr Andrew Belfield's disposition—but what course am I to follow? and how am I to extricate myself from the embarrassments of my situation?

Lucy. Truly, madam, you have but one refuge that I know of.

Soph. And that lies in the arms of a young adventurer!—O Lucy, Lucy! this is a flattering prescription, calculated rather to humour the patient, than to remove the disease.

Lucy. Nay, but if there is a necessity for your taking this step——

Soph. Ay, necessity is grown strangely commodious of late, and always compels us to do the very thing we have most a mind to do.

Lucy. Well, madam, but common humanity to young Mr Belfield.—You must allow he has been hardly treated.

Soph. By me, Lucy?

Lucy. Madam!—No, madam, not by you: but 'tis charity to heal the wounded, though you have not been a party in the fray.

Soph. I grant you—you are a true female philosopher; you would let charity recommend you to a husband, and a husband recommend you to charity.—But I won't reason upon the matter, at least not in the humour I am now, nor at this particular time:—no, Lucy, nor in this particular spot; for here it was, at this very hour, yesterday evening, young Belfield surprised me.

Lucy. And see, madam, punctual to the same lucky moment, he comes again. Let him plead his own cause; you need fear no interruption—my lady has too agreeable an engagement of her own, to endeavour at disturbing those of other people. [*Exit.*

Enter BELFIELD, *Junior.*

Bel. jun. Have I then found thee, loveliest of women! O, Sophia! report has struck me to the heart! if, as I am told, to-morrow gives you to my brother, this is the last time I am ever to behold you.

Soph. Why so, Mr Belfield? Why should our separation be a necessary consequence of our alliance?

Bel. jun. Because I have been ambitious, and cannot survive the pangs of disappointment.

Soph. Alas, poor man! but you know where to bury your disappointments; the sea is still open to you, and, take my word for it, Mr Belfield, the man who can live for three years, ay, or three months, in separation from the woman of his heart, need be under no apprehensions for his life, let what will befall her.

Bel. jun. Cruel, insulting Sophia! when I last parted from you, I flattered myself I had left some impression on your heart.—But in every event of my life, I meet a base, injurious brother—the everlasting bar to my happiness. I can support it no longer, and Mr Belfield, madam, never can, never shall be yours.

Soph. How, sir! never shall be mine? What do you tell me? There is but that man on earth, with whom I can be happy; and if my fate is such, that he is never to be mine, the world, and all it contains, will for ever after be indifferent to me.

Bel. jun. I have heard enough—farewell!

Soph. Farewell, sagacious Mr Belfield; the next fond female who thus openly declares herself to you, will, I hope, meet with a more gallant reception than I have done.

Bel. jun. How—what! is't possible! O Heavens!

Soph. What! you've discovered it at last? Oh, fie upon you!

Bel. jun. Thus, thus, let me embrace my unexpected blessing! Come to my heart, my fond overflowing heart, and tell me, once again, that my Sophia will be only mine!

Soph. Oh, man, man! all despondency one moment, all rapture the next. No question now but you conceive every difficulty surmounted, and that we have nothing to do but to run into each other's arms, make a fashionable elopement, and be happy for life; and I must own to you, Mr Belfield, was there no other condition of our union, even this project should not deter me; but I have better hopes, provided you will be piloted by me; for believe me, my good friend, I am better acquainted with this coast than you are.

Bel. jun. I doubt not your discretion, and shall implicitly surrender myself to your guidance.

Soph. Give me a proof of it then, by retreating from this place immediately. 'Tis my father's hour for walking, and I would not have you meet; besides, your brother is expected.

Bel. jun. Ay, that brother, my Sophia, that brother brings vexation and regret whenever he is named; but I hope I need

not dread a second injury in your esteem; and yet, I know not how it is, but if I were addicted to superstition——

Soph. And if I was addicted to anger, I should quarrel with you, for not obeying my injunctions with more readiness.

Bel. jun. I will obey thee, and yet, 'tis difficult.—Those lips which thus have blest me, cannot dismiss me without—

Soph. Nay, Mr Belfield, don't you—well then—Mercy upon us! who's coming here?

Bel. jun. How? Oh yes, never fear; 'tis a friend;—'tis Violetta;—'tis a lady that I——

Soph. That you what, Mr Belfield?—What lady is it?—I never saw her in my life before.

Bel. jun. No, she is a foreigner, born in Portugal, though of an English family: the packet in which she was coming to England foundered alongside of our ship, and I was the instrument of saving her life. I interest myself much in her happiness, and I beseech you, for my sake, to be kind to her. [*Exit.*

Soph. He interests himself much in her happiness—he beseeches me, for his sake, to be kind to her. What am I to judge of all this?

Enter VIOLETTA.

Vio. Madam, I ask pardon for this intrusion, but I have business with you of a nature that—I presume I'm not mistaken, you are the young lady I have been directed to, the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove?

Soph. I am, madam, but won't you please to repose yourself in the house? I understand you are a stranger in this country.—May I beg to know what commands you have for me? Mr Belfield has made me acquainted with some circumstances relative to the story; and for his sake, madam, I shall be proud to render you any service in my power.

Vio. For Mr Belfield's sake, did you say, madam?—Has Mr Belfield named me to you, madam?

Soph. Is there any wonder in that, pray?

Vio. No, none at all.—In any man else, such confidence would surprise me; but in Mr Belfield 'tis natural—there is no wondering at what he does.

Soph. You must pardon me, I find we think differently of Mr Belfield: he left me but this minute, and in the kindest terms, recommended you to my friendship.

Vio. 'Twas he then, that parted from you as I came up—I thought so, but I was too much agitated to observe him, and I am confident he is too guilty to dare to look upon me.

Soph. Why so, madam? For Heaven's sake, inform me

what injuries you have received from Mr Belfield? I must own to you, I am much interested in finding him to be a man of honour.

Vio. I know your situation, madam, and I pity it; Providence has sent me here in time to save you, and to tell you—

Soph. What!—To tell me what? Oh, speak! or I shall sink with apprehension.

Vio. To tell you, that he is—my husband.

Soph. Husband! your husband? What do I hear, ungenerous, base, deceitful Belfield! I thought he seemed confounded at your appearance—every thing confirms his treachery, and I cannot doubt the truth of what you tell me.

Vio. A truth it is, madam, that I must ever reflect on with the most sorrowful regret.

Soph. Come, let me beg you to walk towards the house. I ask no account of this transaction of Mr Belfield's; I would fain banish his name from my memory for ever, and you shall this instant be a witness to his peremptory dismission. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Another Part of the Garden.*

Enter BELFIELD, *Junior, and* PATERSON.

Bel. jun. And so, sir, these are her ladyship's commands, are they?

Pat. This is what I am commissioned by Lady Dove to tell you—what report shall I make to her?

Bel. jun. Even what you please, Mr Paterson,—mould it, and model it to your liking—put as many palliatives as you think proper to sweeten it to her ladyship's taste, so you do but give her to understand that I neither can, nor will, abandon my Sophia. Cease to think of her, indeed! What earthly power can exclude her idea from my thoughts? I am surprised Lady Dove should think of sending me such a message; and I wonder, sir, that you should consent to bring it.

Pat. Sir!——

Bel. jun. Nay, Mr Paterson, don't assume such a menacing air, nor practise on my temper too far in this business. I know both your situation and my own—consider, sir, mine is a cause that would animate the most dastardly spirit; yours is enough to damp the most courageous. [*Exit.*

Pat. A very short and sententious gentleman! but there is truth in this remark; mine is but a sorry commission, after all—the man's in the right to fight for his mistress—she's worth the venture; and if there was no way else to be quit of mine, I should be in the right to fight too:—'egad, I don't see why aversion shouldn't make me as desperate as love makes him. Hell and fury! here comes my Venus!

Enter LADY DOVE.

Lady D. Well, Paterson, what says the fellow to my message?

Pat. Says, madam? I'm ashamed to tell you what he says —he's the arrantest boatswain that ever I conversed with.

Lady D. But tell me what he says.

Pat. Every thing that scandal and scurrility can utter against you.

Lady D. Against me? What could he say against me?

Pat. Modesty forbids me to tell you.

Lady D. Oh, the vile reprobate! I, that have been so guarded in my conduct, so discreet in my partialities, as to keep them secret even from my own husband; but I hope he didn't venture to abuse my person?

Pat. No, madam, no; had he proceeded to such lengths, I couldn't, in honour, have put up with it; I hope I have more spirit than to suffer any reflections upon your ladyship's personal accomplishments.

Lady D. Well, but did you say nothing in defence of my reputation?

Pat. Nothing.

Lady D. No?

Pat. Not a syllable; trust me for that—'tis the wisest way upon all tender topics to be silent; for he who takes upon him to defend a lady's reputation, only publishes her favours to the world; and therefore I would always leave that office to a husband.

Lady D. 'Tis true; and, if Sir Benjamin had any heart—

Pat. Come, come, my dear lady, don't be too severe upon Sir Benjamin; many men of no better appearance than Sir Benjamin have shown themselves perfect heroes: I know a whole family, that, with the limbs of ladies, have the hearts of lions. Who can tell but your husband may be one of this sort?

Lady D. Ah!——

Pat. Well, but try him; tell him how you have been used, and see what his spirit will prompt him to do. Apropos! here the little gentleman comes: if he won't fight, 'tis but what you expect; if he will, who can tell where a lucky arrow may hit? [*Exit.*

Enter SIR BENJAMIN DOVE.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin, I want to have a little discourse in private with you.

Sir B. With me, my lady?

Lady D. With you, Sir Benjamin; 'tis upon a matter of a very serious nature—pray sit down by me—I don't know how it is, my dear, but I have observed of late, with much concern, a great abatement in your regard for me.

Sir B. Oh, fie, my lady! Why do you think so? What reason have you for so unkind a suspicion?

Lady D. 'Tis in vain for you to deny it—I am convinced you have done loving me.

Sir B. Well now, I vow, my dear, as I am a sinner, you do me wrong.

Lady D. Lookye, Sir Benjamin, love like mine is apt to be quick-sighted, and I am persuaded I am not deceived in my observations.

Sir B. Indeed! and indeed, my Lady Dove, you accuse me wrongfully.

Lady D. Mistake me not, my dear, I do not accuse you, I accuse myself; I am sensible there are faults and imperfections in my temper.

Sir B. Oh, trifles, my dear! mere trifles!

Lady D. Come, come, I know you have led but an uncomfortable life of late, and I am afraid I have been innocently, in some degree, the cause of it.

Sir B. Far be it from me to contradict your ladyship, if you are pleased to say so.

Lady D. I am sure it has been as I say—my over fondness for you has been troublesome and vexatious; you hate confinement, I know you do—you are a man of spirit, and formed to figure in the world.

Sir B. Oh, you flatter me!

Lady D. Nay, nay, there's no disguising it—you sigh for action—your looks declare it: this alteration in your habit and appearance puts it out of doubt—there is a certain quickness in your eye—'twas the first symptom that attracted my regard; and I am mistaken, Sir Benjamin, if you do not possess as much courage as any man.

Sir B. Your ladyship does me honour.

Lady D. I do you justice, Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. Why, I believe, for the matter of courage, I have as much as my neighbours; but 'tis of a strange perverse quality; for as some spirits rise with the difficulties they have to encounter, my courage, on the contrary, is always greatest when there is least call for it.

Lady D. Oh, you shall never make me believe this, Sir Benjamin! you couldn't bear to see me ill used, I'm positive you couldn't.

Sir B. 'Tis as well, however, not to be too sure of that! [*Aside.*

Lady D. You couldn't be so mean-spirited, as to stand by and hear your poor dear wife abused and insulted, and——

Sir B. Oh no, by no means! 'twould break my heart—but who has abused you, and insulted you, and——

Lady D. Who? why this young Belfield, that I told you of.

Sir B. Oh, never listen to him! a woman of your years should have more sense than to mind what such idle young fleers can say of you.

Lady D. [*Rising.*] My years, Sir Benjamin! Why, you are more intolerable than he is—but let him take his course; let him run away with your daughter; it shall be no further concern of mine to prevent him.

Sir B. No, my dear, I've done that effectually.

Lady D. How so, pray?

Sir B. By taking care she sha'n't run away with my estate at the same time. Some people lock their daughters up, to prevent their eloping—I've gone a wiser way to work with mine, let her go loose, and locked up her fortune.

Lady D. And, o' my conscience, I believe you mean to do the same by your wife; turn her loose upon the world, as you do your daughter—leave her to the mercy of every free-booter—let her be vilified and abused—her honour, her reputation, mangled and torn by every paltry, privateering fellow, that fortune casts upon your coast.

Sir B. Hold, my lady, hold! young Belfield did not glance at your reputation, I hope—did he?

Lady D. Indeed, but he did though—and therein I think every wife has a title to her husband's protection.

Sir B. True, my dear; 'tis our duty to plead, but yours to provide us with the brief.

Lady D. There are some insults, Sir Benjamin, that no man of spirit ought to put up with—and the imputation of being made a wittol of, is the most unpardonable of any.

Sir B. Right, my dear, even truth, you know, is not to be spoke at all times.

Lady D. How, sir, would you insinuate any thing to the disparagement of my fidelity?—But choose your side, quarrel you must—either with him or with me.

Sir B. Oh, if that is the alternative, what a deal of time have we wasted!—Step with me into the library, and I'll pen him a challenge immediately. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Cabin, with a view of the Sea, as before.*

Enter PHILIP *and* LUCY WATERS.

Phil. How I have loved you, Lucy, and what I have suf-

fered on your account, you know well enough—and you should'nt now, when I am struggling to forget you, come to put me in mind of past afflictions—go, go, leave me—I pray you, leave me.

Lucy. Nay, Philip, but hear me.

Phil. Hear you, ungrateful girl ! you know it has been all my delight to hear you, to see you, and to sit by your side—for hours I have done it—for whole days together. But those days are past ! I must labour now for my livelihood ; and, if you rob me of my time, you wrong me of my subsistence.

Lucy. O, Philip, I am undone if you don't protect me !

Phil. Ah, Lucy ! that, I fear, is past prevention.

Lucy. No, Philip, no ; I am innocent, and therefore persecuted by the most criminal of men.——I have disclosed all Mr Belfield's artifices to Miss Sophia, and now I'm terrified to death—I saw him follow me out of the park, as I was coming hither, and I dare not return home alone ; indeed, Philip, I dare not.

Phil. Well, Lucy, step in with me, and fear nothing—I see the squire is coming.—He who can refuse his protection to a woman, may he never taste the blessings a woman can bestow ! [*Exeunt.*

Enter BELFIELD, *Senior.*

Bel. Ay, 'tis she !—confusion follow her !—How perversely has she traversed my project with Sophia !—By all that's resolute, I'll be revenged !—My brother, too, returned—Vexatious circumstance ! there am I foiled again.—Since first I stepped out of the path of honour, what have I obtained ?—O treachery ! treachery ! if thou canst not in this world make us happy, better have remained that dull, formal thing—an honest man, and trusted to what the future might produce.

Enter PHILIP.

So, fellow, who are you ?

Phil. A man, sir—an honest man.

Bel. A saucy one, methinks.

Phil. The injurious are apt to think so—however, I ask pardon—as your riches make you too proud, my honesty, perhaps, makes me too bold.

Bel. O, I know you now ! you are son to that old fellow I thought proper to discharge from my farm—Please to betake yourself from the door of your cabin, there's a young woman within I must have a word with.

Phil. If 'tis Lucy Waters you would speak with———

Bel. If, rascal ! it is Lucy Waters that I would speak with—that I will speak with—and, spite of your insolence, com-

pel to answer whatever I please to ask, and go with me wherever I please to carry her.

Phil. Then, sir, I must tell you, poor as I am, she is under my protection.—You see, sir, I am armed—you have no right to force an entrance here; and, while I have life, you never shall.

Bel. Then be it at your peril, villain, if you oppose me.

[*They fight.*

Enter PATERSON, *who beats down their swords.*

Pat. For shame, Mr Belfield! what are you about—Tilting with this peasant?

Bel. Paterson, stand off.

Pat. Come, come, put up your sword.

Bel. D—nation, sir! what do you mean? Do you turn against me? Give way, or by my soul I'll run you through.

Enter CAPTAIN IRONSIDES *and* SKIFF.

Capt. Hey-day, what the devil ails you all!—I thought the whole ship's company had sprung a mutiny. Master and I were taking a nap together, for good fellowship: and you made such a d—ned clattering and clashing, there's no sleeping in peace for you.

Bel. Come, Mr Paterson, will you please to bear me company, or stay with your new acquaintance?

Capt. Oh, ho, my righteous nephew! is it you that are kicking up this riot? Why, you ungracious profligate, would you murder an honest lad in the door of his own house!—his castle—his castellum—Are these your fresh-water tricks?

Bel. Your language, Captain Ironsides, savours strongly of your profession; and I hold both you, your occupation, and opinion, equally vulgar and contemptible.

Capt. My profession! Why, what have you to say to my profession, you unsanctified whelp, you? I hope 'tis an honest vocation to fight the enemies of one's country—you, it seems, are for murdering the friends: I trust, it is not for such a skip-jack as thee art, to fleer at my profession.—Master, didst ever hear the like?

Skiff. Never, captain, never—for my own part I am one of few words; but, for my own part, I always thought, that to be a brave seaman, like your honour, was the greatest title an Englishman could wear.

Capt. Why, so it is, Skiff—ahem!

Bel. Well, sir, I leave you to the enjoyment of your honours; so, your servant.—Sirrah, I shall find a time for you.

[*Going.*

Capt. Harkye, sir, come back—one word more with you.

Bel. Well, sir———

Capt. Your father was an honest gentleman; your mother, though I say it, that should not say it, was an angel; my eyes ache when I speak of her—ar'n't you ashamed, sirrah, to disgrace such parents?—My nephew Bob, your brother, is an honest lad, and as brave as ever stepped between stem and stern—a' has a few faults, indeed, as who is free? But you, Andrew, you are as false as a quicksand, and as full of mischief as a fireship.

Pat. Come, Mr Belfield, for Heaven's sake let us go home. [*Exit with* BELFIELD.

Capt. Harkye, Philip, I forgot to ask you what all this stir was about.

Phil. Sir, if you please to walk in, I will inform you.

Capt. With all my heart—A pragmatical, impertinent coxcomb! Come, master, we'll fill a pipe, and hear the lad's story within doors.—I never yet was ashamed of my profession, and I'll take care my profession shall have no reason to be ashamed of me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Garden.*

Enter BELFIELD, *Junior, and* SOPHIA.

Bel. jun. Madam! madam! will you vouchsafe to give me a hearing?

Soph. Unless you can recall an act no earthly power can cancel, all attempt at explanation is vain.

Bel. jun. Yet, before we part for ever, obstinate, inexorable Sophia, tell me what is my offence.

Soph. Answer yourself that question, Mr Belfield—consult your own heart, consult your Violetta.

Bel. jun. Now, on my life, she's meanly jealous of Violetta—that grateful woman has been warm in her commendations of me, and her distempered fancy turns that candour into criminality. [*Aside.*

Soph. Ha! he seems confounded!—guilty beyond all doubt.

Bel. jun. By heaven, I'll no longer be the dupe to these bad humours!—Lucy Waters, Violetta, every woman she sees or hears alarms her jealousy, overthrows my hopes, and rouses every passion into fury.—Well, madam, at length I see what you allude to; I shall follow your advice, and consult my Violetta; nay, more, consult my happiness—for with her, at least, I shall find repose;—with you, I plainly see, there can be none.

Soph. 'Tis very well, sir; the only favour you can now grant me is, never to see you again; for, after what has passed between us, every time you intrude into my company, you will commit an insult upon good breeding and humanity.

Bel. jun. Madam, I'll take care to give you no further offence. [*Exit.*

Soph. Oh, my poor heart will break!

Enter SIR BENJAMIN DOVE.

Sir B. Hey-day, Sophia, what's the matter? What ails my child? Who has offended you? Did not I see the younger Belfield part from you just now?

Soph. O, sir! if you have any love for me, don't name that base, treacherous wretch to me any more. [*Exit.*

Sir B. Upon my word, I am young Mr Belfield's most obsequious servant—a very notable confusion truly he has been pleased to make in my family! Lady Dove raves, Sophia cries; my wife calls him a saucy, impudent fellow; my daughter says he's a base, treacherous wretch; from all which I am to conclude, that he has spoke too plain truths to the one, and told too many lies to the other. Lady Dove has peremptorily insisted upon my giving him a challenge, but, to say the truth, I had no great stomach to the business till this fresh provocation—I perceive now I am growing into a most unaccountable rage; 'tis something so different from what I ever felt before, that, for what I know, it may be courage, and I mistake it for anger—I never did quarrel with any man, and hitherto no man ever quarrelled with me.—'Egad, if I once break the ice, it sha'n't stop here; if young Belfield doesn't prove me a coward, Lady Dove shall see that I am a man of spirit. Sure I see my gentleman coming hither again! [*Steps aside.*

Enter BELFIELD, *Junior.*

Bel. jun. What meanness, what infatuation possesses me, that I should resolve to throw myself once more in her way!—but she's gone, and yet I may escape with credit.

Sir B. Ay, there he is, sure enough; by the mass, I don't like him—I'll listen awhile, and discover what sort of a humour he is in.

Bel. jun. I am ashamed of this weakness—I am determined to assume a proper spirit, and act as becomes a man upon this occasion.

Sir B. Upon my soul, I'm very sorry for it.

Bel. jun. Now am I so distracted between love, rage, and disappointment, that I could find in my heart to sacrifice her, myself, and all mankind.

Sir B. Lord ha' mercy upon us—I'd better steal off, and leave him to himself.

Bel. jun. And yet, perhaps, all this may proceed from an excess of fondness in my Sophia.

Sir B. Upon my word you are blessed with a most happy assurance.

Bel. jun. Something may have dropped from Violetta to alarm her jealousy; and, working upon the exquisite sensibility of her innocent mind, may have brought my sincerity into question.

Sir B. I don't understand a word of all this.

Bel. jun. Now could I fall at her feet for pardon, though I know not in what I have offended—I have not the heart to move. Fie upon it! What an arrant coward has love made me!

Sir B. A coward, does he say? I am heartily rejoiced to hear it: if I must needs come to action, pray Heaven it be with a coward! I'll even take him while he is in the humour, for fear he should recover his courage, and I lose mine—— So, sir! your humble servant, Mr Belfield! I'm glad I have found you, sir!

Bel. jun. Sir Benjamin, your most obedient.—Pray, what are your commands, now you have found me?

Sir B. Hold! hold! don't come any nearer:—Don't you see I'm in a most prodigious passion? Fire and fury! what's the reason you have made all this disorder in my house? my daughter in tears; my wife in fits; every thing in an uproar; and all your doing. Do you think I'll put up with this treatment? —If you suppose you have a coward to deal with, you'll find yourself mistaken—greatly mistaken, let me tell you, sir!— Mercy upon me, what a passion I am in!—In short, Mr Belfield, the honour of my house is concerned, and I must and will have satisfaction. I think this is pretty well to set in with; I'm horribly out of breath. What great fatigues do men of courage undergo!

Bel. jun. Lookye, Sir Benjamin, I don't rightly comprehend what you would be at; but, if you think I have injured you, few words are best; disputes between men of honour are soon adjusted—I'm at your service in any way you think fit.

Sir B. How you fly out, now! Is that giving me the satisfaction I require? I am the person injured in this matter, and as such have a right to be in a passion; but I see neither right nor reason why you, who have done the wrong, should be as angry as I, who have received it.

Bel. jun. I suspect I have totally mistaken this honest gentleman; he only wants to build some reputation with his wife upon this encounter, and 'twould be inhuman not to gratify him.

Sir B. What shall I do now? 'Egad, I seem to have posed him: this plaguy sword sticks so hard in the scabbard—Well, come forth, rapier—'tis but one thrust; and what should a man fear that has Lady Dove for his wife?

Bel. jun. Hey-day! Is the man mad? Put up your sword, Sir Benjamin: put it up, and don't expose yourself in this manner.

Sir B. You shall excuse me, sir; I have had some difficulty in drawing it, and am determined now to try what metal 'tis made of. So come on, sir.

Bel. jun. Really, this is too ridiculous:—I tell you, Sir Benjamin, I am in no humour for these follies. I've done no wrong to you or yours: on the contrary, great wrong has been done to me; but I have no quarrel with you—so pray put up your sword.

Sir B. And I tell you, Mr Belfield, 'tis in vain to excuse yourself—The less readiness he shows, so much the more resolution I feel.

Bel. jun. Well, sir knight, if such is your humour, I won't spoil your longing. So have at you.

Enter LADY DOVE.

Lady D. Ah! [*Shrieks.*

Bel. jun. Hold, hold, Sir Benjamin! I never fight in ladies' company.

Sir B. Oh, my lady! is it you? Don't be alarmed, my dear; 'tis all over: a small fracas between this gentleman and myself; that's all; don't be under any surprise; I believe the gentleman has had enough; I believe he is perfectly satisfied with my behaviour; and I persuade myself, you will have no cause for the future to complain of his. Mr Belfield, this is Lady Dove!

Bel. jun. Madam, to a generous enemy 'tis mean to deny justice, or withhold applause. You are happy in the most valiant of defenders; gentle as you may find him in the tender passions—to a man, madam, he acquits himself like a man. Sir Benjamin Dove, in justice to your merit, I am ready to make any submission to this lady you shall please to impose. If you suffer her to bully you after this, you deserve to be henpecked all the days of your life.

Sir B. Say no more, my dear Bob; I shall love you for this the longest hour I have to live.

Bel. jun. If I have done you any service, promise me only one hour's conversation with your lovely daughter, and make what use of me you please.

Sir B. Here's my hand—you shall have it; leave us.

[*Exit* BELFIELD, *junior.*

Lady D. What am I to think of all this? It can't well be a contrivance; and yet 'tis strange, that you little animal should have the assurance to face a man, and be so bashful at a rencounter with a woman.

Sir B. Well, Lady Dove, what are you musing upon?—You see you are obeyed; the honour of your family is vindicated: slow to enter into these affairs; being once engaged, I pertinaciously conduct them to an issue.

Lady D. Sir Benjamin—I—I——

Sir B. Here, Jonathan, do you hear—set my things ready in the library; make haste.

Lady D. I say, Sir Benjamin, I think——

Sir B. Well, let's hear what it is you think.

Lady D. Bless us all, why you snap one up so—I say, I think, my dear, you have acquitted yourself tolerably well, and I am perfectly satisfied.

Sir B. Humph! you think I have done tolerably well—I think so too; do you apprehend me? Tolerably! for this business, that you think tolerably well done, is but half concluded, let me tell you; nay, what some would call the toughest part of the undertaking remains unfinished; but I dare say, with your concurrence, I shall find it easy enough.

Lady D. What is it you mean to do with my concurrence? what mighty project does your wise brain teem with.

Sir B. Nay, now I reflect on't again, I don't think there'll be any need of your concurrence; for, nolens or volens, I'm determined it shall be done. In short, this it is;—I am unalterably resolved, from this time forward, Lady Dove, to be sole and absolute in this house—master of my own servants, father to my own child, and sovereign lord and governor, madam, over my own wife!

Lady D. You are?

Sir B. I am.—Gods! gods! what a pitiful, contemptible figure does a man make under petticoat government!—I am determined to be free!——

Enter PATERSON, *and whispers* LADY DOVE.

Ha! how's this, Mr Paterson? What liberties are these you take with my wife, and before my face?—No more of these freedoms, I beseech you, sir, as you expect to answer it to a husband, who will have no secrets whispered to his wife to which he is not privy; nor any appointments made in which he is not a party.

Pat. Hey-day! what a change of government is here! 'Egad, I'm very glad on't. Sir Benjamin, I see you are busy about family affairs; so I'll wait on you some other time.

[*Exit.*

Lady D. What insolence is this, Sir Benjamin? what ribaldry do you shock my ears with? Let me pass, sir, I'll stay no longer in the same room with you.

Sir B. Not in the same room, nor under the same roof, shall you long abide, unless you reform your manners; however, for the present, you must be content to stay where you are.

Lady D. What, sir, will you imprison me in my own house?—I'm sick; I'm ill; I'm suffocated; I want air; I must and will walk into the garden.

Sir B. Then, madam, you must find some better weapon than your fan to parry my sword with: this pass I defend: what, dost think, after having encountered a man, I shall turn my back upon a woman? No, madam, I have ventured my life to defend your honour; 'twould be hard if I wanted spirit to protect my own. To-morrow, madam, you leave this house for ever.

Lady D. Will you break my heart, you tyrant?—Will you turn me out of doors to starve, you barbarous man?

Sir B. Oh! never fear; you will fare, to the full, as well as you did in your first husband's time; in your poor, dear, dead Mr Searcher's time. You told me once, you prized the paltry greyhound that hung at his buttonhole, more than all the jewels my folly had lavished upon you. I take you at your word; you shall have your bauble, and I will take back all mine; they'll be of no use to you hereafter.

Lady D. O, Sir Benjamin! Sir Benjamin! for mercy's sake turn me not out of your doors! I will be obedient, gentle, and complying, for the future; don't shame me; on my kness, I beseech you, don't.

Enter BELFIELD, *Senior.*

Sir B. Mr Belfield, I am heartily glad to see you; don't go back, sir; you catch us, indeed, a little unawares; but these situations are not uncommon in well-ordered families; rewards and punishments are the life of government; and the authority of a husband must be upheld.

Bel. I confess, Sir Benjamin, I was greatly surprised at finding Lady Dove in that attitude: but I never pry into family secrets; I had much rather suppose your lady was on her knees to intercede with you in my behalf, than be told she was reduced to that humble posture for any reason that affects herself.

Sir B. Sir, you are free to suppose what you please for Lady Dove; I'm willing to spare you that trouble on my account; and, therefore, I tell you plainly, if you will sign and seal your articles this night, to-morrow morning Sophia shall be yours. —I'm resolved, that the self-same day which consecrates the redemption of my liberty, shall confirm the surrender of yours.

Lady D. Oh, Mr Belfield ! I beseech you, intercede with this dear cruel man in my behalf ; would you believe that he harbours a design of expelling me his house, on the very day, too, when he purposes celebrating the nuptials of his daughter ?

Bel. Come, Sir Benjamin, I must speak to you now as a friend in the nearest connexion ; I beg you will not damp our happiness with so melancholy an event: I will venture to pledge myself for her ladyship.

Sir B. Well, for your sake, perhaps I may prolong her departure for one day ; but I'm determined, if she does stay to-morrow, she shall not preside at table ; if 'tis only to show the company what a refractory wife, in the hands of a man of spirit, may be brought to submit to. Our wives, Mr Belfield, may tease us, and vex us, and still escape with impunity ; but, if once they thoroughly provoke us, the charm breaks, and they are lost for ever. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Sea-coast.*

Enter OLD GOODWIN *and* FANNY.

Old G. What you tell me, Fanny, gives me great concern ; —that Mr Francis should think to seduce the innocence of my child, for a paltry bribe ! What can have passed to encourage him to put such an affront upon you ?

Fanny. Till this proposal, which I tell you of, I always took Mr Francis for one of the best behaved, modestest young men, I had ever met with.

Old G. To say the truth, Fanny, so did I ; but the world is full of hypocrisy, and our acquaintance with him has been very short.———

Enter FRANCIS.

Hark ye, young man, a word with you : what is it I or my children have done to offend you ?

Fran. Offend me ! what is it you mean ?

Old G. When your vessel was stranded upon our coast, did we take advantage of your distress ? On the contrary, wasn't this poor hut thrown open to your use, as a receptacle for your treasures, and a repose for your fatigues ? Have either those treasures, or that repose, been invaded ? Whom amongst you have we robbed, or defrauded ?

Fran. None, none ; your honesty has been as conspicuous as your hospitality.

Old G. Why then, having received no injury, do you seek to do one ? an injury of the basest nature. You see there a

poor girl, whose only portion in this world is her innocence; and of that you have sought to——

Fran. Hold! nor impute designs to me which I abhor: you say your daughter has no portion but her innocence; assured of that I ask none else:——And, if she can forgive the stratagem I have made use of, I am ready to atone for it by a life devoted to her service.

Old G. Well, sir, I am happy to find you are the man I took you for, and cannot discommend your caution; so that if you like my daughter, and Fanny is consenting—But, soft! who have we got here?

Fanny. I wish Mr Paterson was further, for interrupting us just now!

Enter PATERSON.

Pat. Pray, good people, isn't there a lady with you of the name of Violetta?

Old G. There is.

Pat. Can you direct me to her? I have business with her of the utmost consequence.

Old G. Fanny, you and Mr Francis step in, and let the lady know. [*Exit* FANNY *and* FRANCIS.] If 'tis no offence, Mr Paterson, allow me to ask you, whether there is any hope of our young gentleman here, who is just returned, succeeding in his addresses to Miss Dove?

Pat. Certainly none, Master Goodwin.

Old G. I'm heartily sorry for it.

Pat. I find you are a stranger to the reasons which make against it: but how are you interested in his success?

Old G. I am a witness of his virtues; and consequently not indifferent to his success. [*Exit.*

Enter VIOLETTA.

Pat. Madam, I presume your name is Violetta?

Vio. It is, sir.

Pat. I wait upon you, madam, at Miss Dove's desire, and as a particular friend of Mr Andrew Belfield's.

Vio. Sir!——

Pat. Madam!——

Vio. Pray proceed.

Pat. To entreat the favour of your company at Cropley-castle, upon business, wherein that lady and gentleman are intimately concerned: I presume, madam, you guess what I mean?

Vio. Indeed, sir, I cannot easily guess how I can possibly be a party in any business between Miss Dove and Mr Belfield. I thought all intercourse between those persons was now entirely at an end.

Pat. Oh, no, madam! by no means! the affair is far from being at an end.

Vio. How, sir! not at an end?

Pat. No, madam; on the contrary, from Sir Benjamin's great anxiety for the match, and, above all, from the very seasonable intelligence you was so good to communicate to Miss Sophia, I am not without hopes that Mr Andrew Belfield will be happy enough to conquer all her scruples, and engage her consent to marry him.

Vio. Indeed! but pray, sir, those scruples of Miss Dove's, which you flatter yourself Mr Belfield will so happily conquer, how is it that ladies in this country reconcile themselves to such matters? I should have thought such an obstacle utterly insurmountable.

Pat. Why, to be sure, madam, Miss Dove has had some doubts and difficulties to contend with; but duty, you know —and, as I said before, you, madam, you have been a great friend to Mr Belfield; you have forwarded matters surprisingly.

Vio. It is very surprising, truly, if I have!

Pat. You seem greatly staggered at what I tell you; I see you are a stranger to the principles upon which young ladies frequently act in this country: I believe, madam, in England, as many, or more, matches are made from pique, than for love; and to say the truth, I take this of Miss Dove's to be one of that sort. There is a certain person, you know, who will feel upon this occasion.

Vio. Yes: I well know there is a certain p erson who will feel upon this occasion; but, are the sufferings of that unhappy one to be converted into raillery and amusement?

Pat. Oh, madam, the ladies will tell you, that therein consists the very luxury of revenge!—But, I beseech you, have the goodness to make haste; my friend, Mr Belfield, may stand in need of your support.

Vio. Thus insulted, I can contain myself no longer. Upon what infernal shore am I cast? Into what society of demons am I fallen? that a woman, whom by an act of honour I would have redeemed from misery and ruin, should have the insolence, the inhumanity, to invite me to be a spectatress of her marriage with my own husband!

Pat. With your husband! What do I hear, ?—Is Mr Andrew Belfield your husband?

Vio. Ay; do you doubt it? 'Would I could say he was not!

Pat. Just Heaven! you then are the Violetta, you are the Portuguese lady I have heard so much of, and married to Mr

Belfield: base and perfidious!—Why, madam, both Miss Dove and myself conceived that 'twas the young adventurer with whom you suffered shipwreck, that———

Vio. What, Lewson? the brave, generous, honourable Lewson!

Pat. Lewson! Lewson! as sure as can be, you mean young Belfield; for now the recollection strikes me, that I've heard he took that name before he quitted England. That Lewson, madam, whom we believed you married to, is Robert Belfield, the younger brother to your husband.

Vio. Mercy defend me! into what distress had this mutual mistake nearly involved us!

Pat. Come then, madam, let us lose no time, but fly with all despatch to Cropley-castle; I have a post-chaise waiting, which will convey us thither in a few minutes: but before we go, I'll step in and direct these good people to find young Belfield, and send him after us.—Old Ironsides and all must be there. [*Exit.*

Vio. Let me reflect upon my fate—wedded, betrayed, abandoned! at once a widow and a wife—all that my soul held dear, in the same hour obtained and lost. O false, false Belfield! Strong, indeed, must be that passion, and deeply seated in my heart, which even thy treachery could not eradicate! —Twice shipwrecked! twice rescued from the jaws of death! —Just Heaven! I do not, dare not, murmur; nor can I doubt but that thy hand invisibly is stretched forth to save me; and, through this labyrinth of sorrow, to conduct me to repose.

Enter PATERSON.

Pat. Now, madam, if you will trust yourself to my convoy, I'll bring you into harbour, where you shall never suffer shipwreck more. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—SIR BENJAMIN DOVE'S *House.*

Enter SIR BENJAMIN *and* LADY DOVE.

Sir B. Upon these terms and stipulations, Lady Dove, I consent to your remaining at Cropley-castle. Enjoy you your own prerogative, and leave me in possession of mine; above all things, my dear, I must insist that Mr Paterson be henceforward considered as my friend and companion, and not your ladyship's.

Lady D. Nay, but indeed and indeed, my dear Sir Benjamin, this is being too hard with me, to debar me the common gratifications of every woman of distinction: Mr Paterson, you know, is my very particular friend.

Sir B. 'Tis for his being so very particular, my dear, that I object to him.

Lady D. Friendship, Sir Benjamin, is the virtuous recreation of delicate and susceptible minds; would you envy me that innocent pleasure? Why, you know, my dearest, that your passion for me, which was once so violent, is now softened and subsided into mere friendship.

Sir B. True, my dear; and therefore I am afraid, lest my love having, by easy degrees, slackened into friendship, his friendship should, by as natural a transition, quicken into love; say no more, therefore, upon this point, but leave me to Mr Paterson, and Mr Paterson to me;—go—send Sophia to me —oh, here she comes: your ladyship need not be present at our conference; I think my own daughter surely belongs to my province, and not yours.—Good morning to you.

[*Exit* LADY DOVE.

Enter SOPHIA.

Sir B. Well, daughter, are you prepared to comply with my desires, and give your hand to Andrew Belfield this morning?

Soph. Sir!

Sir B. My heart is fixed upon this event: I have watched late and early to bring it to bear; and you'll find, my child, when you come to peruse your marriage settlement, how tenderly I have consulted your happiness in this match.

Soph. Alas! I should never think of searching for happiness amongst deeds and conveyances; 'tis the man, and not the money, that is likely to determine my lot.

Sir B. Well, and is not Mr Belfield a man? a fine man, as I take it he is, and a fine estate I'm sure he has got: then, consider, likewise, how this alliance will accommodate matters in the borough of Knavestown, where I and my family have stood three contested elections with his, and lost two of them; that sport will now be at an end; and our interest will be consolidated by this match, as well as our estates.

Soph. Still you mistake my meaning; I talk of the qualities of a man—you of his possessions; I require in a husband, good morals, good nature, and good sense; what has all this to do with contiguous estates, connected interests, and contested elections?

Sir B. I don't rightly understand what you would have, child; but this I well know, that if money alone will not make a woman happy, 'twill always purchase that that will. I hope, Sophia, you've done thinking of that rambling, idle, young fellow, Bob Belfield?

Soph. Perish all thought of him for ever!—Nothing can be more contrary, more impossible in nature, than my union with young Belfield; age, ugliness, ill-nature, bring any thing to my arms, rather than him.

Sir B. But why so angry with him, child?—This violent detestation and abhorrence, is as favourable a symptom as any reasonable lover could wish for.

Enter PATERSON.

Pat. Joy to you, Sir Benjamin! all joy attend you both! the bridegroom by this time is arrived; we saw his equipage enter the avenue, as ours drove into the court.

Sir B. Mr Paterson, sir, I know not if yet your friend is to be a bridegroom; I find my daughter here so cold and uncomplying, for my own part, I don't know how I shall look Mr Belfield in the face.

Pat. Fear nothing, Sir Benjamin: make haste and receive your son-in-law: I have news to communicate to Miss Dove, which, I am confident, will dispose her to comply with your wishes.

Sir B. Well, sir, I shall leave her to your tutorage. This obliging gentleman undertakes not only for my wife, but my daughter too. [*Exit.*

Soph. I am surprised, Mr Paterson——

Pat. Hold, madam, for one moment: I have made a discovery of the last importance to your welfare; you are in an error with regard to young Belfield.—Violetta, the lady you believed him married to, is here in the house; I have brought her hither at your request; and from her I learn, that the elder brother is her husband—he who this very morning, but for my discovery, had been yours also.

Soph. What's this you tell me, sir? Where is this lady?—where is Violetta? where is young Belfield?

Pat. Violetta, madam, I have put under safe convoy; and, by this time, your waiting woman has lodged her privately in the closet of your bedchamber: there you will find her, and learn the whole process of this providential escape. I'll only speak a word to Sir Benjamin, and come to you without any further delay. [*Exit* SOPHIA.

Enter SIR BENJAMIN DOVE *and* BELFIELD, *Senior.*

Sir B. Well, Mr Paterson, what says my daughter?

Pat. Every thing that becomes an obedient daughter to say: so, that if this gentleman is not made completely happy within this hour, the fault will lie at his door, and not with Miss Sophia.

Sir B. This is good news, Paterson; but I am impatient to have the ceremony concluded; the bells are ringing, the parson is waiting, and the equipages are at the door: step up to Sophia, and tell her to hasten; and harkye, my friend, as you go by Lady Dove's door, give her a call; do you mind me, only call at the door: don't you go in; she's busy at work

upon a large parcel of ribbands, which I've given her to make into wedding-favours; she'll be very angry if you go into her chamber. Go, go, get you gone. [*Exit* PATERSON.

Bel. How comes it to pass, Sir Benjamin, that Mr Paterson is become so necessary an agent in the female affairs of your family? I confess to you my pride is wounded, when I find I am to thank him for your daughter's consent to marry me. The man that can prevail upon a woman to act against her liking, what may he not persuade her to do with it?

Sir B. Your remark is just; Paterson has certainly some secret faculty of persuasion; and all that can be said is, that 'tis better to see your danger before marriage, than to be feeling it out, as I have done, afterwards.

Enter CAPTAIN IRONSIDES *and* BELFIELD, *Junior.*

Sir B. What, old acquaintance, are you come to rejoice with me on this occasion?—Bob Belfield too, as I live! you are both heartily welcome.—I could have spared their visit notwithsanding. [*Aside.*

Bel. My brother here! vexation!

Bel. jun. Sir Benjamin! I come now to claim your promise of one hour's conversation with your daughter.

Sir B. The devil you do!

Bel. Ridiculous!

Bel. jun. To you, sir, obligations of this sort may be matter of ridicule: but while I religiously observe all promises I make to others, I shall expect others to be as observant of those they make to me.

Bel. Sir, I have a most profound veneration for your principles, and am happy to find your understanding so much cultivated by travel; but, in spite of your address, you will find it rather difficult to induce me to waive my right in Miss Dove, in favour of a professed adventurer.

Bel. jun. Shameless, unfeeling man! an adventurer do you call me? You, whose unbrotherly persecution drove me to this hazardous, this humiliating occupation?

Capt. Sirrah! Bob! no reflections upon privateering; it has lined your pockets well, you young rogue: and you may tell your fine brother there, that we have landed treasure enough upon his estate to buy the fee-simple of it.—Ay, and for what I know, of Sir Wiseacre's here into the bargain.

Sir B. What's that you say, Captain Ironsides? Let's have a word in a corner with you.

Bel. Lookye, sir, if you conceive yourself wronged by me, there is but one way—you know your remedy.

Bel. jun. I know your meaning, brother; and, to demon-

strate how much greater my courage is than yours, I must confess to you, I dare not accept your proposal.

Sir B. No, no, I've given him enough of that I believe.

Capt. Bob Belfield, if I did not know thee for a lad of mettle, I should not tell what to make of all this: for my own part, I understand none of your scruples and refinements, not I; a man is a man; and if I take care to give an affront to no man, I think I have a right to take an affront from no man.

Sir B. Come, gentlemen, suspend your dispute; here comes my daughter—let her decide betwixt you.

Bel. jun. Let me receive my sentence from her lips, and I will submit to it.

Enter SOPHIA, PATERSON, *and* LADY DOVE.

Sir B. Here's a young gentleman, daughter, that will take no denial; he comes to forbid the banns, just when you are both going into the church to be married.

Soph. Upon my word, this is something extraordinary.—What are the gentleman's reasons for this behaviour?

Sir B. He claims a sort of promise from me, that he should be indulged in an hour's conversation with you, before you give your hand to his brother.

Soph. An hour's conversation? What little that gentleman can have to say to me, I believe, may be said in a very few minutes.

Bel. I think, brother, this conversation don't promise a great deal.

Soph. In the first place, then, I own to this gentleman, and the company present, that there was a time when I entertained the highest opinion of his merit. Nay, I will not scruple to confess, that I had conceived a regard for him of the tenderest sort.

Capt. And pray, young lady, how came my nephew to forfeit your good opinion?

Soph. By a conduct, sir, that must for ever forfeit, not my esteem only, but your's, and all mankind's: I am sorry to be his accuser; but I will appeal to you, Mr Belfield, who are his brother, whether it is reconcileable either to honour or humanity, to prosecute an affair of marriage with one woman, when you are previously and indispensably engaged to another?

Bel. Humph!

Soph. Yet this, sir, is the treatment I received.—Judge, therefore, if I can desire or consent to have any long conversation with a gentleman who is under such engagements;—nay,

whom I can prove actually married to another woman in this very house, and ready to vouch the truth of what I assert.—Judge for me, Mr Belfield, could you believe any man capable of such complicated, such inconceivable villany ?

Bel. Heavens ! this touches me too closely.

Sir B. Sir, I would fain know what excuse you can have for this behaviour ? I can tell you, sir, I don't understand it.

Lady D. Oh, fie ! fie upon you, Mr Belfield ; I wonder you are not ashamed to show your face in this family.

Sir B. Who desired you to put in your oar ?

Capt. Why, sirrah, would not one wife content you ? 'Tis enough, in all reason, for one man ; is it not, Sir Benjamin ?

Bel. jun. Sir, when it is proved I am married, accuse me.

Capt. Lookye, Bob, I don't accuse you for marrying ; 'twas an indiscretion, and I can forgive it ; but to deny it is a meanness, and I abhor it.

Soph. Mr Belfield, do you say nothing upon this occasion ?

Bel. Paterson, I am struck to the heart ; I cannot support my guilt ! I am married to Violetta—save me the confusion of relating it. This dishonourable engagement for ever I renounce ; nor will I rest till I have made atonement to an injured wife. Madam, I beg leave to withdraw for a few minutes.

Bel. jun. Hold, sir ! this contrivance is of your forging ;—you have touched me too near ; and now, if you dare draw your sword, follow me.

Soph. Hold, gentlemen ; you forget the lady is now in the house ; she is a witness that will effectually put an end to your dispute—I will conduct her hither. [*Exit.*

Bel. jun. I agree to it.

Capt. Harkye, nephew ; I shrewdly suspect you have been laying a train to blow yourself up : if once Bob comes fairly alongside of you, you'll find your quarters too hot to hold you : I never yet found my boy out in a lie, and sha'n't tamely see a lie imposed upon him ; for, while he is honest, and I have breath, he shall never want a friend to stand by him, or a father to protect him.

Bel. Mr Paterson, explain my story ; I will depart this instant in search of Violetta.

Enter SOPHIA *and* VIOLETTA.

Soph. Stay, I conjure you ! Stay, turn, and look back upon this lady before you go. [*Presenting* VIOLETTA.

Bel. My wife !

Soph. Yes, sir, your wife, and my unanswerable witness.

Sir B. Hey-day ! here's a turn !

Capt. I thought how 'twould be.

Vio. Yes, sir, your faithful, your forsaken wife.

Soph. Thank Heaven, that I can add, your only wife!

Bel. How shall I look upon you! What shall I say!—Where shall I hide my confusion! Oh, take me to your arms, and in that soft shelter let me find forgiveness and protection.

Vio. Be this your only punishment! and this!

Bel. jun. Was it then a sister I preserved from death?

Bel. What's this I hear? Oh, brother, can you pardon too?

Bel. jun. Be indeed a brother, and let this providential event be the renovation of your friendship.

Bel. What shall I say to you, madam? [*To* SOPHIA.]—Paterson, you know my heart: bear witness to its remorse. By Heaven, my secret resolution was, instantly to have departed in search of this my injured wife: but I'm not worthy even of your resentment: here is one that merits, and returns, your love. [*Turning to his Brother.*

Capt. Come, god-daughter, we can never say the fleet's fairly come to an anchor, while the admiral's ship is out at sea. [*Presenting* BELFIELD, *Junior.*] My nephew here is as honest a lad as lives, and loves you at the soul of him: give him your hand, and I'll broach the last chest of dollars, to make him a fortune deserving of you. What say you, my old friend?

Sir B. Here's my hand! I've spoke the word; she's his own. Lady Dove, I won't hear a syllable to the contrary.

Capt. Then the galleon is thy own, boy. What should an old fellow like me do with money? Give me a warm night-cap, a tiff of punch, and an elbow-chair in your chimney corner, and I'll lay up for the rest of my days.

Bel. jun. How shall I give utterance to my gratitude or my love?

Bel. Now are you all assembled to overwhelm me with confusion. Like some poor culprit, surrounded by a crowd of witnesses, I stand convicted and appalled. But all your wrongs shall be redressed; my whole life shall be employed in acts of justice and atonement. Virtue, and this virtuous woman, were my first ruling passions:

> Now they resume their social soft control,
> And love and happiness possess my soul.

THE END.

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